

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 07891 141813Z

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 870

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR GR UK

SUBJECT: GREEK PUBLIC REACTION TO PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS'

LONDON VISIT GENERALLY FAVORABLE

REF: ATHENS 7812

1. WHILE PERHAPS LACKING MUCH OF THE EUPHORIC TONE SURROUNDING PREVIOUS VISITS TO OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS' EXPEDITION TO LONDON WAS GENERALLY ACCORDED A FAVORABLE REVIEW BY THE GREEK PRESS. REACTION TO THE TRIP WAS ESPECIALLY POSITIVE IN TERMS OF GREECE'S ENTRY INTO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY (EC) AND IN REMOVING THE CHILL IN BILATERAL RELATIONS BROUGHT ON BY THE CYPRUS SITUATION IN THE POST-JUNTA ERA. THE PRESS ALSO REPORTED WITH SOME SATISFACTION THAT THE QUESTION OF GREECE'S RETURN TO THE MILITARY SIDE OF NATO DID NOT COME UP NOR DID THE BRITISH APPLY ANY PRESSURE ON CARAMANLIS IN THIS RESPECT. A GOG SPOKESMAN INDICATED THAT THE GREEK SIDE HAD BEEN "MORE THAN SATISFIED" WITH THE LONDON VISIT. HOWEVER, NOT ALL AGREED. THERE WAS A SMATTERING OF CRITICAL COMMENT

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PAGE 02 ATHENS 07891 141813Z

BY THE LEFTIST PRESS TOWARDS BRITAIN AND SKEPTICISM AS TO THE

UTILITY OF SUCH TRAVELS BY THE PRIME MINISTER.

2. DURING HIS RETURN FLIGHT FROM LONDON, PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS REPORTEDLY TOLD ACCOMPANYING NEWSPAPERMEN THAT HIS TALKS WITH BRITISH GOVERNMENT LEADERS "WENT WELL" AND THAT A CORDIALITY HAD PREVAILED, THE RESULTS OF WHICH WOULD BE SEEN VERY SOON. HIS PRESS SECRETARY REFLECTED A SIMILAR TONE IN DIFFERENT WORDS. THE PRESS HERE REPORTED THAT IN ADDRESSING THE POINT, UNDER SECRETARY FOR PRESS AND INFORMATION LAMBRIAS STATED "WE ARE MORE THAN JUST SATISFIED...TO EMPLOY BRITISH UNDERSTATEMENT, I WOULD SAY WE HAVE NO REASON TO BE DISSATISFIED."

3. THE ISSUES OF PRIMARY CONCERN TO GREEKS WERE, OF COURSE, BRITISH SUPPORT FOR GREEK ENTRY INTO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND FOR THE GREEK POSITION ON THE CYPRUS QUESTION (REFTEL). THUS PRIME MINISTER WILSON'S PLEDGE OF UNRESERVED SUPPORT OF GREECE WITH REGARD TO ENTRY INTO THE EC WAS FRONT PAGE MATERIAL. LEFT-OF-CENTER ATHINAIKI BANNERED "ON EEC ANSWER: YES". RIGHT WING ELEFTHEROS COSMOS STRESSED "GREEK-BRITISH TALKS HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTIVE; SUPPORT IN THE EEC AND COLLABORATION ON THE PROBLEMS OF CYPRUS".

4. ON THE CYPRUS QUESTION, MEDIA COVERAGE WAS SIMILARLY EXTENSIVE. THE BASIC TENET SEEMED TO BE THAT SINCE (IN THE GREEK VIEW) BRITAIN WAS IN LARGE PART LIABLE FOR THE CYPRUS CATASTROPHE, BRITAIN SHOULD (AND WOULD) TAKE A LEADING ROLE IN BRINGING ABOUT A SOLUTION. IN THIS CONNECTION THE PRESS PLAYED UP THE STATEMENT IN THE GREEK COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE VISIT THAT THE TWO GOVERNMENTS AGREED ON ACTIVE COLLABORATION IN SEEKING A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT. INDEPENDENT, PRO-GOVERNMENT KATHIMERINI STRESSED "IN VIEW OF BRITAIN'S PARTICULAR RESPONSIBILITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITUATION, SHE ALSO HAD A PARTICULAR RESPONSIBILITY TO REDRESS IT...BRITAIN, PERHAPS MORE THAN ANY OTHER COUNTRY, CAN EXERT INFLUENCE BOTH ON THE UNITED STATES AND TURKEY." CONSERVATIVE ACROPOLIS WROTE "WITHIN THE WEEK, SERIOUS BRITISH PRESSURE TO BE EXERCISED UPON ANKARA." THE PRESS HAS ALSO TIED AN ANTICIPATED BRITISH INITIATIVE ON CYPRUS IN ANKARA WITH A SIMILAR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 ATHENS 07891 141813Z

EC-NINE MOVE.

5. NOT ALL REACTION WAS FAVORABLE, HOWEVER, LEFT-OF-CENTER ELEFTHEROTYPISS CHARACTERIZED AS "LIONS' DENS AND SNAKE PITS" CERTAIN OF THE FOREIGN COUNTRIES RECENTLY VISITED BY CARAMANLIS. MORE SPECIFICALLY THE JOURNAL CONCLUDED THAT "OFFICIAL GREECE WILL AGAIN RETURN EMPTY-HANDED FROM BRITAIN WHOSE HANDS ARE DRIPPING WITH BLOOD"

BECAUSE OF THE CYPRUS QUESTION. IN A SIMILAR MODE,  
CONSERVATIVE, PRO-GOVERNMENT ACROPOLIS STRESSED "...NOW  
IS THE TIME FOR COOL CALCULATIONS. WHAT EXACTLY DO WE MEAN  
TO BRITAIN AND BRITAIN TO US IN THE CURRENT GAME OF FORCE AND  
NATIONAL INTEREST." COMMUNIST (KKE-INTERIOR) AVGHI CON-  
TRASTED THE LONDON TRIP WITH CARAMANLIS' WARM VISITS TO  
EAST EUROPEAN CAPITALS WHERE "SINCERITY WAS GENUINE AND THE  
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN REGIMES DID NOT INFLUENCE THE TALKS...  
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CAPITALIST EUROPE AND SOCIALIST  
EUROPE TEACHES SOMETHING ABOUT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF  
DIPLOMACY WHEN IT IS EXERCISED ON THE SAME LEVEL."  
STEARNS

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